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Correspondence

REVIEW OF A REVIEW—A REPLY TO MR. GETCHEV

Managing Editor MODERN LANGUAGE JOURNAL:

Chateaubriand said: "La critique n'a jamais tué ce qui doit vivre et l'éloge n'a jamais fait vivre ce qui doit mourir." Nevertheless, it has been generally and rightly admitted that the verdict of the critic has a great influence upon the career of a work of the intellect; perhaps not so great upon the length of its existence, but surely upon the character and the extent of its influence. It has been, therefore, tacitly agreed that the critic should make a thorough study of the work he is reviewing and render an impartial judgment. The author, on the other hand, who may be considered partial, is expected to keep silent. This is as it should be. But it seems to me that when the author is convinced that his book has been treated unfairly he must be allowed to protest. Such is my case. I feel that the review of my *Exercices Français* published in the April issue of the MODERN LANGUAGE JOURNAL does not comply with the above principle, and I beg permission to reply.

The reviewer writes: "Vocabulary is taught through questions and answers." . . . A simple glance at the "Table des Matières" *Exercices de Vocabulaire*, will show that this statement is inaccurate. Vocabulary is taught through equivalents, antonyms, association of ideas, definitions and derivatives. A few exercises are in the form of questions, but based on one of the preceding principles.

"The original compositions are awkward to handle." . . . While there have been provided, for these exercises, detailed outlines, and while it was my idea that these outlines should be developed in class previous to their treatment by the individual students, nobody, I imagine, expects to be able to correct all such compositions in class. There are in the books several other kinds of composition that can easily be corrected collectively, but the reviewer does not mention them.

"The *Précis de Grammaire* of the Second Part should have been of a more advanced type." . . . This is, of course, a matter of opinion.

V. 1, p. 126 IV, 2. "Satisfait des pauvres études. *Des* is considered an instance of the partitive." The reviewer's statement gives the impression that I said that *des* was partitive. In reality, if there be an error in this paragraph at all, it consists in my not adding in the parenthesis that *des* was not partitive.

V. I, p. 137. "On remplace l'adjectif possessif *mon, ton, son* par l'article. Quel article?" . . . The article is indicated in the line following.

V. I, p. 142. "Less common adjectives . . . are discussed in regard to the preposition used with them, while . . . such adjectives as *bon, fort, gentil, prêt* are omitted" . . . *Prêt* is perhaps an omission, although it has been treated in the exercises in connection with *près*, but I should be glad to have the reviewer formulate a clear statement as to the prepositions used with *bon, fort* and *gentil*.

The reviewer further states: "Mr. Pargment fails to indicate what part of speech these adjectives with the prepositions ascribed to them govern . . . and also fails to give the different prepositions with which these adjectives would govern different parts of speech." The first is hardly a matter of theory; as to the second, I will say that the reviewer should have noted that all the adjectives given govern the same preposition whatever the object.

V. I, p. 152. "In *qu'est-il arrivé*, *que* is considered as the subject." Yes, because *que* is the subject. Formerly the formula was *Quoi est arrivé?* then *qu'est arrivé?* Then this turn of speech, influenced probably by such constructions as "Pierre est-il arrivé?" became *qu'est-il arrivé?* *Il* is the apparent, grammatical subject of no value, as in *il faut*; the real subject is *que*. There is no redundancy, just as there is none in *il s'est passé des choses fâcheuses*, *il m'est arrivé un malheur*, *Pierre est-il arrivé*, etc.¹

V. I, p. 155. "J'ai su que vous étiez parti.—*Étiez parti* is taken for an imperfect." I regret having given this sentence as an instance of the imperfect, since it will be confusing to the American student. Yet, there is no error in fact. The meaning of the sentence shows that it is rather the Imperfect of a state (the result of an action) than the Pluperfect of an action, and it is the meaning alone that, in these cases, indicates the tense. Cf.: *Où est votre frère*?—*Il est sorti* (State. Present Ind.). *Le malade est sorti hier pour la première fois*. (Action. Past indefinite.) *Où était votre frère*?—*Il était parti* (State. Imperfect.) *Quand nous sommes arrivés il était déjà parti* (Action. Pluperfect, because of the *déjà*).

In a letter written by Léopold Sudre to a reader of the MODERN LANGUAGE JOURNAL and handed over to me, the famous grammarian explains this phenomenon of the language as follows: "Chaque fois que le participe passé après le verbe *être* indique le résultat d'une action, il donne au tour complet un sens que n'indique pas la forme. *Vous étiez parti*, bien qu'appartenant à un verbe intransitif, doit être assimilé à "la maison était construite."

¹ See Crouzet, *Grammaire Française*, p. 79, and Sudre, *Grammaire Française, cours supérieur*, p. 65. Both state explicitly that in *qu'est-il arrivé*, *que* is the subject.

C'est un reste de l'emploi en ancien français de l'auxiliaire *être* avec les verbes intransitifs: on distinguait "J'ai allé" marquant l'action, de "Je suis allé" marquant le résultat de l'action."

V. I, p. 170 to 175. "A striking lack of uniformity in the explanations of the various uses of the adverbs" . . . I should like the reviewer both to prove that uniformity in this case would serve a purpose and to make clear by the same process the difference between *autant* and *tant*, *fortement* and *fort*, *avant* and *auparavant*, etc.

V. I, p. 172. "Davantage cannot be followed by *de* or *que*.—This is a difficult and unimportant point and in dispute among grammarians." A correct statement would have been "*was* difficult." At present it is neither difficult nor unimportant, nor in dispute. It is simply wrong. Every grammar now in use states categorically that *davantage* can have no object.²

"Some unusual and rather inaccurate translations appear in the vocabulary." . . . It is possible that some of these translations are "unusual." I prefer to admit it than to go over both volumes in order to find the words to which the given translations refer. But a few examples will show that the spirit in which the review was made is not less unusual. So, for instance, *duvet* is translated in the book *down, wool; bégayer, to stammer, to lisp; apprivoiser, to tame, to make familiar*, which translations can be found in any dictionary. The reviewer takes from the vocabulary *wool, to lisp, to make familiar*, and omits the others. Further, when the translation is unfavorable to me, he indicates the word of the text to which it refers (*s'engourdir, to become dull*—of a squirrel in winter), but when the unusual translation is justified by the word of the text, he ignores this fact: *crever, to put out (les yeux); boucher, to shut (se boucher les oreilles), épi, ear (de blé), etc.*

² Larive et Fleury, *Grammaire*, 3^e année: "Les grammairiens de la fin du 18^e siècle ont décidé que *davantage* ne pouvait être suivi de *que* . . . Cette décision a aujourd'hui force de loi."

Cl. Augé, *Cours supérieur*: "Davantage s'emploie sans complément."

Leclair et Rouzé, *Cours supérieur*: "Davantage n'est jamais suivi de *que*."

Crouzet, *Grammaire Française simple et complète*: "On évitera avec soin des tours comme: *davantage de pain; davantage que moi*."

Larousse, *Grammaire Complète*, and *Nouveau Larousse Illustré*: "Autrefois *davantage* se mettait avant un adjectif. . . . On disait aussi *davantage* devant un nom. . . . Il pouvait aussi être suivi de *que*. Ces différentes manières d'employer *davantage* ne sont plus autorisées."

Dictionnaire Général: "Davantage . . . avec complément: Vieilli."

Dictionnaire de l'Académie, 6^e édition: "Davantage se dit toujours absolument."

La Grammaire des Grammaires: "Davantage était autrefois suivi de *que* . . . mais aujourd'hui c'est un adverbe et rien de plus. En faire usage autrement c'est faire un solécisme des plus barbares . . . Davantage est un adverbe après lequel on ne doit jamais mettre un *que* ni un *de*."

The first and also the last errors indicated by the reviewer (V. I, p. 126, 8, 2 and p. 177, I) are real, but the way of indicating them is misleading. As everybody can see, they are due to a regrettable oversight.

So much for the accuracy of the review and for what its author calls "typical instances of certain defects." As for its completeness, I shall only say that, while the reviewer has found the time and the patience to examine every detail of the Grammar and count the words that have not been included in the Vocabulary, which sections are nothing but supplements to the books, he has found no time to examine the books themselves. It seems to me that, while he had a perfect right to expect accuracy everywhere and to look for weak points where they are easier to check up, I had a right to expect a critical analysis of the books themselves. I believe that the reviewer would not then have said that "they are composed of elements not new or original." For a different judgment I refer to the review by Professor Raymond Weeks in *The Educational Review* (May, 1921).

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GERMAN IN INDIANA

Managing Editor MODERN LANGUAGE JOURNAL:

As professor of Modern Languages in Franklin College, I feel that you will be interested in the following resolutions adopted by the Faculty, Oct. 19, 1921.

RESOLUTIONS PASSED BY THE FACULTY OF FRANKLIN COLLEGE,
October 19, 1921

WHEREAS neither England nor France at any time during or after the war has taken any action prohibiting the study of German, and

WHEREAS other states and cities of our own country not dominated by war hysteria have also not prohibited but rather continued the teaching of German, and

WHEREAS England and France have actually encouraged the study of that language for reasons including self-protection, scientific investigation, the development of commerce and the cultural value accruing from the study of any great literature, and

WHEREAS by resolution of the United States Senate, the state of war between the United States of America and Germany has been declared at an end, and

WHEREAS friendly relations between the United States and Germany are necessary to the world's peace and can best be promoted by the better mutual understanding which comes from a familiarity with each other's languages, laws and customs, Be It

Resolved, That the Faculty of Franklin College, realizing the burden of leadership that rests on our institutions of higher learning do hereby petition the Senate and the Legislature of the Sovereign State of Indiana to rescind the action prohibiting the teacher of German in the High Schools of Indiana, and Be It Further

Resolved, That the Faculty of Franklin College invite the faculties of other institutions of higher learning in the State of Indiana to unite with them in demanding immediate action in this matter which is of vital concern to the cause of education.

JOHN C. BLANKENAGEL